

X.—*Remarks on two recently published Papers on the Ornithology of the Solomon Islands.* By T. SALVADORI, C.M.Z.S.

DURING the year 1879 two papers on the birds of the Solomon Islands have been published; and as I have paid some attention to the ornithology of those islands, which come within the area of the Papuan subregion, I have thought that some remarks on them would not be utterly useless.

One of these papers is by Mr. Ramsay, and was published in the 'Proceedings of the Linnean Society of New South Wales,' vol. iv. pp. 65–84, under the title "Notes on the Zoology of the Solomon Islands, Part i., Aves."

The other paper, by Mr. Tristram, has the title "On a Collection of Birds from the Solomon Islands" (*Ibis*, 1879, pp. 437–444, pls. xi., xii.).

Mr. Ramsay's paper, read in January last, was first made known in Europe from a preliminary account published in 'Nature,' vol. xx. June 5, 1879, p. 125. But, very strange to say, the two editions do not agree together in several points; and we can only explain this by supposing that Mr. Ramsay, having rather too hastily sent his account to be published in 'Nature,' found afterwards the necessity of making some alterations and corrections in the original paper, read before the New-South-Wales Society in the month of January, but published much later. This would have been of no great consequence if Mr. Ramsay had found it convenient to add some explanatory notes. Thus, for example, in the account in 'Nature,' we find mentioned and shortly described a *Pseudorectes cinnamomeum* (sic), of which there is no mention in the original paper. I supposed that Mr. Ramsay had suppressed this name, having found that it was established on the female of *Pachycephala orioloides*, Peale; but why did he not state that such was the case? Again, in 'Nature' there is described a *Calornis solomonensis*, not mentioned in the original paper, where we have *Calornis cantoroides*, not mentioned in 'Nature,' but which I take to be the same.

Another practice in Mr. Ramsay's paper, to which I think there is great objection, and which certainly Mr. Ramsay

ought to have avoided, is that he has *used different names in the two editions for the same supposed new species*. Thus in the original paper we have *Monarcha brodiei*, which in 'Nature' stands as *Monacha barbata* !

A third objectionable practice, which Mr. Ramsay could have easily avoided, is the use of very strange names as if they were Latin, viz. *Myiagra ferrocyanea* (sic), *Rhipidura rufofronta* ! And, besides, to call a *Rhipidura* by the name of *rufofronta*, or *rufofrontata*, as in the original paper, can only lead to confusion, as there is the old *Rhipidura rufifrons* (Lath.), well known to all Australian ornithologists.

Forty-five species are mentioned in Mr. Ramsay's paper. For convenience' sake I shall follow Mr. Ramsay's order, which is no order at all, as he has not, to use his own words, "adopted any scientific classification, but has just enumerated the species as they came most conveniently to hand" (*l. c.* p. 94).

ASTUR SOLOENSIS, Lath. ; Ramsay, *l. c.* p. 66.

From the description it appears to me that Mr. Ramsay had before him a specimen of my *Urospizias etorques*, and not of true *Tachyspizias soloensis*.

NINOX PUNCTULATA, Quoy et Gaim. ; Ramsay, *ibid.*

This is a Celebes bird ; and what Ramsay's specimens can be I know not.

HALCYON CHLORIS, var., Ramsay, *l. c.* p. 67.

I should say that the supposed variety is a specimen of *Halcyon julia*, which Mr. Tristram mentions among the birds of the Solomon Islands.

HALCYON LEUCOPYGIA, Verr. ; Ramsay, *ibid.*

Mr. Ramsay describes for the first time the female of this species, till now only known from the single specimen in the British Museum.

EUDYNAMIS TAITENSIS, Sparrm. ; Ramsay, *l. c.* p. 70.

I should be rather surprised to find this species among the

birds of the Solomon Islands ; and I should say that the specimens alluded to require comparison.

“CHALCITES PLAGOSUS, Lath.,” Ramsay, *ibid.*

If the birds mentioned by Mr. Ramsay are like *C. minutillus*, Gould, they cannot be *C. plagosus*, which has the upper part of the head a beautiful coppery red colour.

PACHYCEPHALA ORIOLOIDES, Peale ; Ramsay, *ibid.*

I should call this *Pachycephala astrolabi*, Bp. Consp. i. p. 32. Mr. Ramsay adds the description of the female, which I take to be = *Pseudorectes cinnamomeum* (sic), Ramsay, Nature, xx. p. 125, not mentioned in the original paper.

GRAUCALUS HYPOLEUCUS, Gould ; Ramsay, *l. c.*, p. 71.

This is quite new to the Solomon Islands ; and I should say that it requires comparison.

GRAUCALUS DUSSUMIERI, Less. ; Ramsay, *ibid.*

This is a species of the Philippines ; and I do not think that it can have found its way to the Solomon Islands. Most likely the bird intended is *G. sublineatus*, Selater, P. Z. S. 1879, p. 448, pl. xxxvi.

GRAUCALUS PUSILLUS, Ramsay, *ibid.*

This seems to be a good species, allied to *G. axillaris*, Salvad. ; but it is very difficult to give an opinion on *Graucali* and Campophagidæ in general without actual examination.

CARPOPHAGA PISTRINARIA, Bp. ; Ramsay, *l. c.* p. 72.

Mr. Ramsay remarks that this species comes near *C. vanwycki*. Once I thought that they were the same (Monogr. del sottog. *Globicera*, p. 25) ; but such is not the case, as Mr. Selater assures me.

MACROPYGIA, sp., Ramsay, *l. c.* p. 73.

Mr. Ramsay writes to me that he has lately described this species as *M. castanea*.

PTILOPUS VIRIDIS, var., Ramsay, *ibid.*

Surely this is not the true *P. viridis* from the Amboina group, but most likely a new species.

"CALORNIS CANTOROIDES, Less.," Ramsay, *l. c.* p. 76.

This is no species of Lesson, but of Gray. The Solomon Islands are a new locality for this bird. I have already mentioned above that to it most likely belongs *Calornis salomonensis*, Ramsay, *Nature*, xx. p. 125, a name altogether left out of Mr. Ramsay's full paper.

DICÆUM ERYTHROTHORAX, H. et J., apud Ramsay, *l. c.* p. 77.

D. erythrothorax is from Bouru. I suppose that the Solomon-Islands bird mentioned by Mr. Ramsay is *D. æneum*, H. et J. Mr. Gray, in the 'Hand-List,' i. p. 145, no. 1427, has wrongly united *D. pectorale*, of New Guinea, with *D. erythrothorax*.

MYIAGRA FERROCYANEA, Ramsay, *l. c.* p. 78.

This bird, so strangely named, is quite unknown to me, and appears to be a good species.

MYIAGRA PALLIDA, Ramsay, *ibid.*

I feel much inclined to accept Mr. Ramsay's suggestion that this may be the female of the preceding.

MONARCHA RUFOCASTANEA, Ramsay, *l. c.* p. 79.

Mr. Ramsay writes to me that this is *Pomarea castaneiventris* (Verr.). Mr. Tristram also has *P. castaneiventris* from the Solomon Islands. I observe, however, that Mr. Ramsay's dimensions are much smaller than those given by Mr. Sharpe for the type of this species, 'Cat. Birds,' iv. p. 435.

MONARCHA BRODIEI, Ramsay, *l. c.* p. 80.

This seems a good species. It is the same bird as that called *M. barbata*, Ramsay, in 'Nature,' xx. p. 125 !

SAULOPROCTA COCKERELLI, Ramsay, *l. c.* p. 81.

I question whether this is more than an accidental variety of *S. tricolor*.

RHIPIDURA RUFOFRONTATA (!), Ramsay, *l. c.* p. 82.

Rhipidura rufofronta (!), Ramsay, *Nature*, xx. p. 125.

See my remarks on *R. russata* below.

CINNYRIS (?) DUBIA, Ramsay, *l. c.* p. 83.

Mr. Ramsay is quite doubtful about the right position of

this bird, whether it belongs to the Nectariniidæ or to the Meliphagidæ; it is utterly unknown to me.

Mr. Tristram's paper treats of thirty-three species, twelve of which have been described as new. Two of these, *Ceyx gentiana* and *Charmosyna margaritæ*, are splendid gems, quite unknown before. On others, described as new or already known, I have the following remarks :—

COLLOCALIA LINCHI, H. et M.; Tristr. Ibis, 1879, p. 438.

The true *C. linchi* from the Sunda Islands is replaced in the Papuan subregion by *C. esculenta*; so I think that Mr. Tristram's bird requires comparison.

HIRUNDO TAHITICA, Gm.; Tristr. l. c. 439.

I doubt whether the bird from the Solomon Islands is really the true *H. tahitica*, which I believe to be confined to the Polynesian subregion. It is more probably the allied form *H. javanica*, Sparrm.; the differences between the two are very small.

MYZOMELA PAMMELÆNA, Sclat.; Tristr. ibid.

It seems to me that the jet-black *Myzomela* mentioned by Mr. Tristram agrees better with *M. nigrita* than with *M. pammelæna*, if they are really distinct. I have seen the type of the latter, and I am rather doubtful about its being different from *M. nigrita*.

PIEZORHYNCHUS VIDUA, Tristr. ibid.

Mostly likely this is = *Monarcha brodiei*, Ramsay, = *M. barbata*, Ramsay (*vide antea*), although in Mr. Ramsay's description the white uropygium is not mentioned.

MYIAGRA CERVINICAUDA, Tristr. ibid.

This species requires comparison with *M. pallida*, Ramsay (*vide antea*), which, as already noted, may be the female of *M. ferrocyanea*.

RHIPIDURA RUSSATA, Tristr. l. c. p. 440.

This seems the same as *R. rufofrontata* (*vide antea*); but even in this case Mr. Tristram's name will have to be used in preference to that of *R. rufofrontata*, Ramsay, to avoid confusion with *R. rufifrons* (Lath.).

SYMMORPHUS AFFINIS, Tristr. *l. c.* p. 440.

Unknown to me.

EDOLIOSOMA SALOMONIS, Tristr. *ibid.*

This requires comparison with *E. remotum*, Sharpe, Mitth. Zool. Mus. Dresd. iii. 3, p. 369, from New Ireland (*Brown*), New Hanover (*Huesker*), and the Duke-of-York Islands (*Brown*).

GRAUCALUS, sp. inc. ♀, Tristr. *l. c.* p. 441.

I think that Mr. Tristram is right in supposing that the female alluded to belongs to *G. sublineatus*, Sclat.

GRAUCALUS MONOTONUS, Tristr. *ibid.*

I should like to see this bird, which, judging from the description, seems very like *G. papuensis*, although I do not suppose it can be the same.

PACHYCEPHALA CHRYSOPHORI, Tristr. *ibid.*

Mr. Tristram, in describing this bird, does not mention any allied species; but from its yellow chin I should say that it comes very near to *P. astrolabi*, Bp., also from the Solomon Islands, with which therefore it may require comparison.

PTILOPUS CERASEIPECTUS, Tristr. *l. c.* p. 442.

I suspect this to be the same as *P. salomonis*, Gray, described from a female specimen, now in the British Museum.

CARPOPHAGA (GLOBICERA) RICHARDSI, Tristr. *l. c.* p. 443.

Certainly the same as my *Carpophaga (Globicera) rufigula*, Salvad. (Atti R. Ac. Sc. Tor. xiii. p. 536, 1878, et Monogr. sottogen. *Globicera*, p. 14, 1878), the type of which is in the British Museum. Mr. Tristram seems to have overlooked my Monograph.

MACROPYGIA AROSSI, Tristr. *ibid.*

This very likely = *M. castanea*, Ramsay, mentioned in a letter of this gentleman to me (*vide supra*).

Turin, Zoological Museum,
December 12th, 1879.